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ROCK ISLAND, ILL.
WATER WORKS COMMITTEE

MUNICIPAL WATERWORKS, SIXTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY 1871-1936

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SIXTY FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY
1871 -:- 1936

MUNICIPAL WATERWORKS

ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

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Introduction

ON AUGUST 14th, 1871, steps were taken to organize the first Water Works in the City of Rock Island. In 1882 through the generosity of the Hon. P. L. Cable, the pumping station was built on the present site. We have just completed remodeling the pumping station and added two new filters at a cost of over $100,000.00, and it was decided at a meeting of the Water Work Committee to hold a public inspection of the Pumping Station and Filter Plant to enable the people to see just what has been done and also to get them interested in their Water Works System. It was also decided to have a Souvenir booklet printed showing the history of the Water Works, to acquaint you with the plant and its operations.

It was through the assistance rendered by the Rock Island Argus, in furnishing data from their files and others, which enabled us to be in a position to get the necessary information contained in this booklet. As we have no "set-up" provided to take care of printing this booklet, we solicited ads from the firms whose names you will find printed herein.

We wish especially to express our most sincere gratitude and best wishes to all who helped to furnish the necessary data and to our advertisers, who are bearing all the expense of printing this booklet. We hope our work has not been in vain, and that the information contained herein will be of value to you all.

Alderman HENRY LECOT,
Chairman, Water Works Committee.

Alderman LAWRENCE O. SWANSON,
Committee on Publication.

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ILLINOIS LIBRARY
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

WATER WORK SYSTEM

OF

Rock Island, Illinois

ONE of the most vital things necessary in our lives is pure drinking water. Perhaps few people when they turn on the faucet to draw water ever stop to consider all the work and intricate machinery and safe-guards that are employed to assure the citizens of Rock Island an adequate supply of pure water. The source of our water supply is the Mississippi River, and our intake pipes extend to the main channel of the river. The completion of the Government dam, however, created a large pool or lake above the dam, which holds an abundant water supply, and the mouth of the two large intake pipes, one being 20″ which is increased to 30″ about 300 feet from the mouth to take care of any increase needed in the future, and the other 30″, are located north of the locks and east of the first dam and extend from this point a distance of approximately 2110 feet to connect to our pumping plant located at the foot of Twenty-fourth Street. The water flows through these pipes into three deep wells by gravity and is pumped through a 24″ and 16″ pipe to the Filtering Plant, located on the Bluff at 22nd Street and 16th Avenue, which has a Reservoir and settling basin, with a capacity of 16,000,000 gallons. The raw water enters into the settling basins where it comes in contact with the alum solution being fed from the filteration plant. When the alum is mixed with the water, it forms flakes which collect the mud and suspended matter and settles to the bottom of the basins which are 25 feet deep and have a coagulation period from four to twelve hours when the plant is operated at full capacity. After the water has passed through the settling basins, it is conducted to the filters by a 30 inch conduit where the chlorine is applied twenty-five feet from the filters. There are eight filter units, each of which is 24x17 feet, a filtering area of 408 square feet or a capacity of one million gallons per 24 hours per filter. The filters are constructed of sand and gravel with strainers imbedded in concrete and the flow is regulated by rate controllers and hydraulically operated valves. After the water passes through the mechanical filters, with a capacity of 8,000,000 gallons daily, it gets another light dose of chlorine and goes into the clear lake and is ready for use.

Daily tests are made at the plant and once a month samples are sent to the State Health Department at Springfield, and reports from tests made there and also at the plant show the water to be in good condition and to conform with the U. S. Public Health Service Standard.

The water is distributed to the regions below the hill by gravity, and the Hill District is supplied from two large tanks, one located on the Reservoir grounds and the other at 14th Street and 42nd Avenue, to which the water is pumped. This arrangement assures a good pressure throughout the City and enables the City to furnish water at the lowest minimum rate in the state for cities of our size. The City has almost two million dollars invested in the Water Works System.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

Pumping Plant

THE first steps taken to install a Water Works System in Rock Island was on August 14th, 1871, when the City Council passed an ordinance authorizing the building of a pumping station and the installation of water mains. A $75,000.00 bond issue for that purpose was authorized, and a Commission of seven members, composed of the Mayor, three Aldermen and three citizens, to carry out the intent and purpose of the ordinance, was appointed.

The first pumping station was located at the north end of Sixth Street on the bank of the Mississippi River. One winter while located at this point, an epidemic of what was then termed "Winter Cholera" broke out, and whether correct or not, it was attributed to the city water, as the intake pipe was not extended very far into the river, and it was contended that when the river froze over it narrowed the river channel and the sewerage from the City flowed near the mouth of the intake pipe and polluted the water. It was then deemed advisable to remove the pumping station above the sewerage of the City, but there were no funds available with which to do this. However, Mr. P. L. Cable, who was known for his philanthropical acts, came to the rescue of the City with a donation of $25,000.00 for the purpose of building a new Pumping Station and installing a 20 inch intake pipe into the main channel of the river. This Station erected at the east end of Second Avenue and the north end of Twenty-fourth Street and the laying of the new intake pipe, were completed in the year 1882. The pump at the old station being inadequate to supply the increasing consumption of water, a new pump with a capacity of 3,000,000 gallons was purchased and installed in the new station. At that time there were two crews of engineers and firemen working twelve hours per day, every day in the year, but in the year 1890 another crew was added to the force and thus the eight-hour shift was put into effect.

During the year 1891, the Hon. Ben T. Cable, in order to supplement the gift of his father, P. L. Cable, and to insure a supply of clear water, donated to the City a filter of the Jewel type, with a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons. Owing to its construction, and having no reserve for clear water, the filter was greatly handicapped, as at times during the day the consumption of water was at the rate of 3,000,000 gallons while the filter had a capacity only of 2,000,000 gallons. During this year the consumption of water during the day rose at times to over 3,000,000 gallons which was the capacity of the pumps and of course there was no reserve left for fire protection. This same year the City Council purchased a 5,000,000 gallon capacity, high duty pump from the Holly Manufacturing Company, which was installed and accepted August 31, 1891.

During the year 1894 it was discovered that the 20 inch intake pipe was too small as it would not deliver to the pumps the amount of water required at the peak demand. A new 30 inch, cast iron intake pipe was laid from the pumping station to the main channel of the river, a distance of 2110 feet. This pipe was laid with the bottom four feet below the low water mark. This pipe extended out into the river from the foot of Twenty-fourth Street.

The increased consumption of water compelled the city in 1906 to increase the pumping capacity and a new Snow Pump with a capacity of 8,000,000 gallons per 24 hours was purchased

and installed, and in 1915 in order to have more pumping capacity in reserve, there was purchased and installed a Kerr's Steam turbine centrifugal pump with a 6,000,000 gallon capacity. This gave the pumping plant a pumping capacity of 18,000,000 gallons per twenty-four hours.

In 1895 the water mains were extended to the Bluff District of the City and a standpipe was erected on Thirtieth Street near Tenth Avenue. A booster pump was placed in the then Huber Brewery (now the R. I. Brewery) on Thirtieth Street and Seventh Avenue to supply the standpipe reservoir and through it to the Bluff District of the City. The City was rapidly growing and of course there were greater demands for water. Considerable thought and time was spent on the problems confronting the Water Works Department, and it was finally decided that a reservoir should be constructed somewhere on the Bluff Region with a capacity sufficient to supply the district below the Bluff with water by gravity from the reservoir instead of pumping it all by direct pressure.

FILTERATION AND RESERVOIR SYSTEM

The City during the year 1897 purchased twenty-six acres on the bluff between Thirteenth and Eighteenth Avenues and Twenty-second and Twenty-fourth Streets, paying $1,000 per acre for the same. We might mention in connection with this purchase the same public-spirited and generous citizens who were owners of this tract donated to the City, free of charge, the large tract of land that now comprises Long View Park.

The City constructed on this reservoir site, two settling basins, three slow sand filters and a reservoir. The settling basin and the sand filters were completed in 1899, and the main reservoir of 10,000,000 gallons capacity was completed in the year 1900.

The slow sand filters never gave satisfaction as they were expensive to clean and the ice in winter made cleaning the basins very difficult. To overcome this handicap the City Council in the year 1909 decided to adopt the rapid sand mechanical filters and executed a contract with the Pittsburgh Filter Company for a filter having a capacity of 6,000,000 gallons per 24 hours. This filter was erected and was put into operation March 28, 1911, and has always given entire satisfaction. Two slow basins are now used for storage of clear water and the third was converted into a building for the mechanical filters.

There is a standpipe on the Reservoir Park site with a capacity of 500,000 gallons to supply the Bluff District. When the town of Sears was annexed to the City of Rock Island in 1914 it was part of the city ordinance that water service be extended to this territory. Water mains were laid in this territory and a standpipe to supply this high service was erected on Fourteenth Street and Forty-second Avenue. This standpipe has a capacity of 100,000 gallons and it is supplied with water from the pumps at the Main Reservoir Plant. There are two electric centrifugal pumps in the filter house each having a capacity of 3,000,000 gallons with which to furnish the necessary power to supply the Bluff District. With this increased capacity the old standpipe on Thirtieth Street, which was of no further use, was dismantled. However, with the rapidly growing section in the South East section of the City, steps will have to be taken in the near future to add a third standpipe to take care of the Bluff District water supply.

The citizens of Rock Island may well be proud of their Water Works System, which is easily the most valuable asset that the City possesses. It is entirely self-supporting, owes no debt except the obligations incurred by laying mains by special assessment. The amounts of all special assessments paid by property owners for water main construction are credited on the water rent of the owner as they accrue. The city pays no water rent to the Water Works Department for water supplied to other departments, such as amount furnished for fire protection, flushing of sewers, flushing streets, water used at all City buildings and our City Parks and Recreation Play Grounds.

It is estimated the amount of water furnished gratis to other departments is easily worth $50,000.00 for which the Water Works Department receives no credit.

A very conservative appraisal of the value of the city's Water Works System is given in the following table, showing description of the property and its valuations which will give the citizens an idea of the immense business being done in this department.

Filteration and Reservoir Property	$ 405,373.31
Pumping Station	150,399.65
Water Mains laid by City	725,871.48
Water Mains laid by special assessment	577,872.07
Meters	82,993.38
	$1,942,509.89

OPERATING STATEMENT OF THE ROCK ISLAND CITY WATER WORKS

	Year ending March 31, 1935	Year ending March 31, 1936
Total Water Rents Extended:		
Flat Rates	16,228.49	16,313.81
Meter Rates	114,159.14	114,814.49
Miscellaneous	1.20	18.62
Total Extended	130,388.83	131,146.92
Less Cash Rebates Allowed:	275.46	122.20
Cash Discounts Allowed	4,067.60	4,464.34
Total Deductions	4,343.06	4,586.54
Net Water Rent Sales	126,045.77	126,560.38
Meter Repairs and Shut-Off Fees	266.45	306.85
Miscellaneous Material Sales and Service	477.81	1,154.91
Gross Income	126,790.03	128,022.14
Water Works Exp. less Cap. Items and Exp. Refd.	38,592.02	43,273.46
Reservoir Exp. less Cap. Items and Exp. Refd.	25,555.93	33,733.87
Water Work Const.	535.18	8,853.40
Water Works Emergency Reserve		2,731.30
Total Expense	64,683.13	88,592.03
Operating Profit	62,106.90	39,430.11
Plus:		
Interest and Miscellaneous Earnings	1,054.85	3,019.67
Total Earnings for Year	63,161.75	42,449.78
Less:		
Depreciation and Inventory Adjustment	4,177.30	389.32
Net Profit	58,984.45	42,060.46

Some of the larger items of expense and supplies for the year ending March 31st, 1936 are as follows:

Fuel	$ 4,282.30
Electric Power at Pumping Station	6,856.28
Electric Power at Filter Plant	4,477.00
Pipes, Valves, Hydrants, Meters, etc.	5,285.65
Purification Supplies	13,033.67
*State Sales Tax	1,667.40

*This Sales Tax was assumed by the City and not passed on to the Consumer.

Operating expense for this period was $88,592.03 with $24,565.01 expended for Capital items.

FUNDS TRANSFERRED FROM WATER WORKS TO THE CITY GENERAL FUND

On June 11th, 1928 the then City Council authorized the transferring of the Surplus Funds of the Water Works into the City General Fund. This has no doubt been of great help to the City to meet its obligations. However, it was a question as to the advisability of doing this, as some of the Aldermen were of the opinion, this surplus should be used for major improvements of the Water Works System first. The present administration agreed, and while $17,707.77 was transferred in 1935, none was transferred in 1936.

Total amount transferred:

Year ending	3-31-29	$ 22.195.08
	3-31-30	40,000.00
	3-31-31	28,000.00
	3-31-32	49,000.00
	3-31 33	44,500.00
	3-31-34	46,363.81
	3-31-35	37,911.67
	3-31-36	17,707.77
		$285,678.33

The following men have served as Superintendent of the Water Works Department:

Fred Cramer was the first Superintendent and served from its first establishment until May 1883.

Joseph Kerr	May 1883 to May 1885
M. T. Stafford	May 1885 to Feb. 1889
John A. Murrin	Feb. 1889 to May 1895
Ezra Wilcher	May 1895 to May 1897
John A. Murrin	May 1897 to May 1899
Chas. Witherell	May 1899 to May 1901
P. J. Bancroft	May 1901 to Sep. 1905
J. W. Cavanaugh	Sep. 1905 to May 1909
O. C. Kelley	May 1909 to May 1911
Chas. Wilson	May 1911 to Nov. 1911
R. W. Sharp	Nov. 1911 to Jan. 1916
John A. Murrin	Jan. 1916 to Nov. 1934
N. J. Hoeltzner	Nov. 1934

Immediately upon assuming the office of Superintendent of the Water Works System, Mr. Hoeltzner recommended to the council that certain repairs and improvements should be made at once instead of diverting the Surplus to the General Fund of the City. This was agreed upon by the Water Works Committee and finally passed by the City Council. A complete survey was made to determine whether to continue to operate our pumping plant by steam or to electrify the same. A competent Engineering firm was engaged to do this work and upon their recommendation the Plant was electrified. Two electrical operated pumps of 10,000,000 gallons each were completely installed on July 21st, 1935. The total cost of electrical installation and pumps amounted to $21,312.50. After this work was completed the City Council passed resolutions to improve the Pumping and Filtering Plants by adding 2 new filters and to apply for a PWA Grant. Mr. Benj. A. Horn was engaged as the architect to draw plans to remodel the Pumping and Filtering Plants. A Building Committee composed of Aldermen Henry Lecot, Chairman, John White, George W. Stauduhar, John M. Kaiser, C. C. Wilson and Lawrence O. Swanson was appointed by Mayor John Bengston to confer with Mr. Horn. Many meetings were held by this Committee and the City Council; plans were adopted and a PWA Grant applied for. Upon approval of the Grant, which was 30% of the estimated cost, contracts were awarded and work started. The total cost was as follows:

PUMPING STATION

General Contract (Greenleaf Const. Co.)	42,846.50	
Other Expense, Fees, Ins., etc.	3,123.86	
		45,970.36

FILTER PLANT

General Contract (O. M. Randall Const. Co.)	17,774.00	
Filter Contract (E. W. Bacharad & Company)	9,500.00	
Other Expenses, Fees, etc.	1,670.95	
		28,944.95
Total		74,915.31

To pay for this improvement the City Council transferred from the Water Works Surplus Fund, to the Building Fund, the amount of $57,-800.00 to which is added the PWA Grant of $19,200.00 making a total of $77,000.00.

During the past two years 3839 feet of 6 inch pipe have been laid making a total of 109 miles of water mains. Eight fire hydrants have been installed in this same period making a total of 1020 compared to 100 which were in use in 1882. There is at present about 7800 meter accounts and 1500 flat rate accounts. However, all flat rate accounts are to be cancelled as quickly as possible and replaced with meters.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

PUBLIC FIRE HYDRANTS

No person or persons other than members of the Fire Department shall open same except those having a written permit from the Superintendent of the Water Works.

OBSTRUCTING STOP COCKS

No person shall in any manner obstruct access to any public hydrant or stop cocks connected with any water pipe.

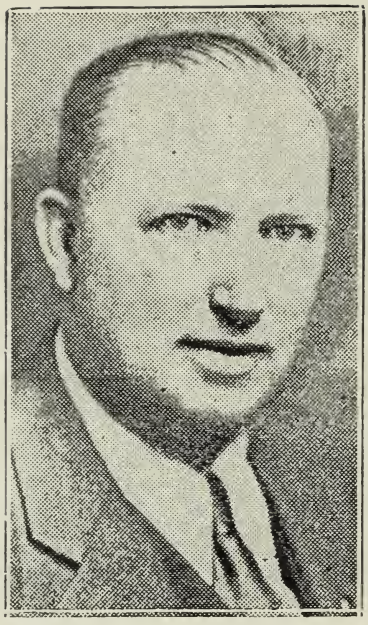
SERVICE

All persons taking water shall keep their service pipes, stop boxes, cocks and all attachments and apparatus in good repair and protected from frost at their own expense and shall prevent all unnecessary waste of water.

All officers and employees shall have free access at proper hours to all parts of every building where water is consumed.

For a violation of any rule or regulation, the Superintendent shall have the right to stop the supply of water without any previous notice thereof; nor will it be restored except upon payment of $1.00 to cover the expense.

All water consumers shall be responsible for all damages done to a meter on their premises and wherever repairs are to be made on parts furnished by the City the same shall be collected with the Water Rent.



JOHN A. BENGSTON

Mayor

of Rock Island, Ill.

NICHOLAS J. HOELTZNER

Superintendent

Has many years of service in the Water Department, is well versed in all branches, and through his efficient and economical management, the City of Rock Island is provided with pure water at rates cheaper than any city the size of Rock Island in the State. He was first appointed Engineer in 1907 and served to 1916, promoted to Chief Engineer in 1916 and served in that capacity until 1934 when he was promoted to the office of Superintendent.

He also has a capable staff of assistants who have had many years of experience:

George C. Ethel, Analyst at Filter Plant, 25 years service
Emil J. Klein, Head Meter Man, 4 years service
Louis Sersig, Outside Foreman and Pipeman, 14 years service

FILTER PLANT
OUTSIDE VIEW

FILTER PLANT
INTERIOR

BENJ. A. HORN, Architect

Photos by John Eckman

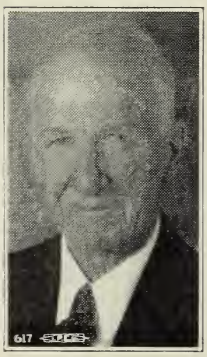
MARTIN T. RUDGREN

City Clerk

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

HENRY A. LECOT

HERBERT E. COOK



C. C. WILSON

H. EDWARD WENDELL

C. E. JOHNSON

E. WILSON ROBINSON

Photos by John Eckman

JOHN M. KAISER

HERMAN SCHNELL

JOHN M. WHITE

GEORGE W. STAUDUHAR

JOHN C. KAISER

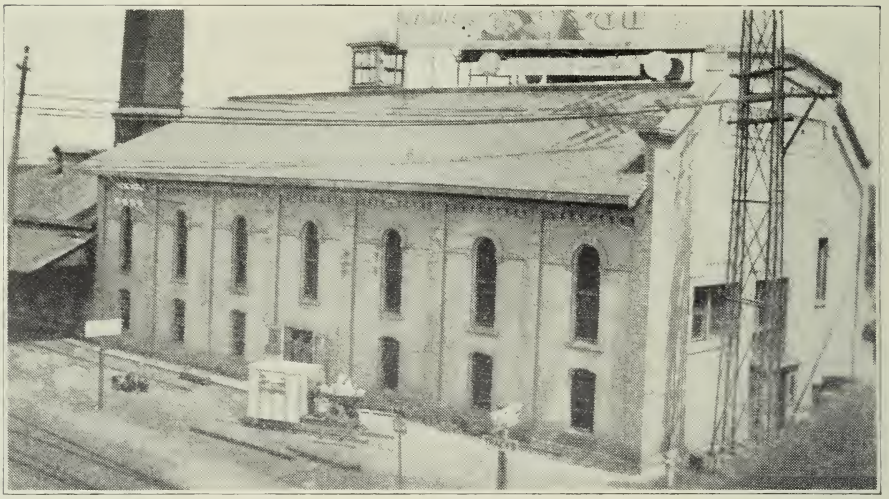
RUSSELL H. MAHIN

VERNON R. HENDREN

LAWRENCE O. SWANSON

Photos by John Eckman

PUMPING STATION—OLD BUILDING
SOUTH VIEW



REMODELED PUMPING STATION
SOUTH VIEW

BENJ. A. HORN, Architect

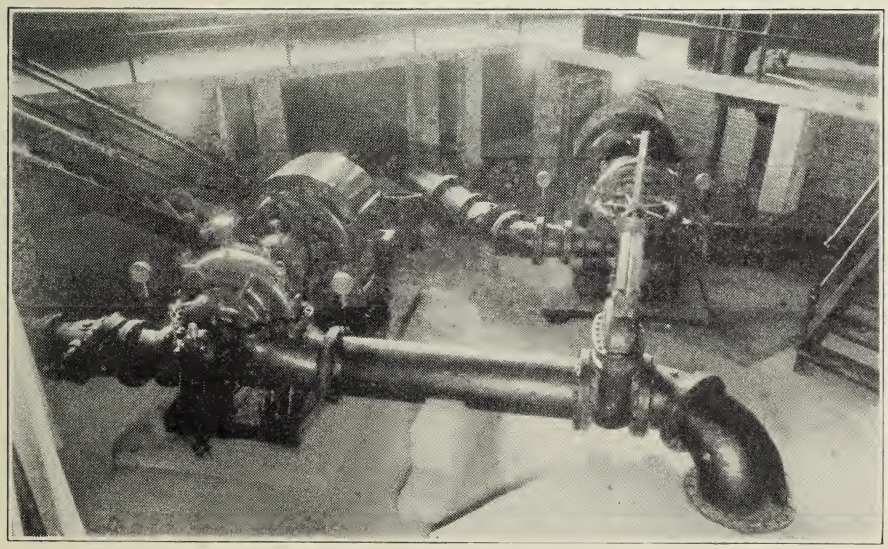
Photos by John Eckman

REMODELED PUMPING STATION
FRONT VIEW

BENJ. A. HORN, Architect

Photo by John Eckman

INTERIOR PUMPING STATION



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His Honor Mayor JOHN BENGSTON

The Board of Aldermen

The Water Works Building Committee

The Water Works Committee

and

N. J. HOELTZNER, Supt. of Water Works

for their efforts in obtaining for the

City of Rock Island

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AND TWO NEW FILTERS

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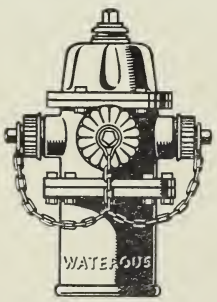

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DEPARTMENT

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General Contractor

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Improved Pumping Plant

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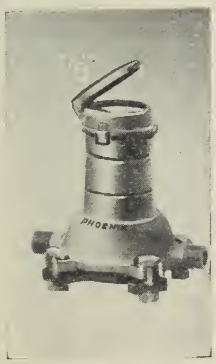
INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER CO.

Motor Truck Sales

PHOENIX WATER METERS



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1636 15th Street Place, Moline
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2041 Bridge Ave., Davenport

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Builders of the Improved Filter Plant

ESTIMATES CHEERFULLY GIVEN

Blackhawk Electric Company

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Contractor of Wiring on Pumping Station

ESTIMATES CHEERFULLY GIVEN

CONGRATULATIONS and BEST WISHES

•

THE PEOPLES POWER COMPANY, as a citizen of this community, joins with other loyal citizens in taking pleasure and pride in the opening of the rebuilt waterworks.

This company has every interest in the welfare of the community that the individual citizen may have. The company pays taxes here—has millions invested here in pole lines, gas mains, and other fixed properties—is made up of men and women who live and maintain families here—and depends for its existence upon the sale of its services to the people and to the industries situated here.

On the occasion of the opening of the rebuilt city waterworks system, this company wishes to offer its congratulations and best wishes to the Rock Island Waterworks. The gratitude of every citizen and every institution in the city is due to the loyal citizens, city officials and employees whose planning and public-spirited interest in the welfare of the community has accomplished so great an improvement in the city's pure and adequate water service.

•

Peoples Power Company

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
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3 0112 025314227